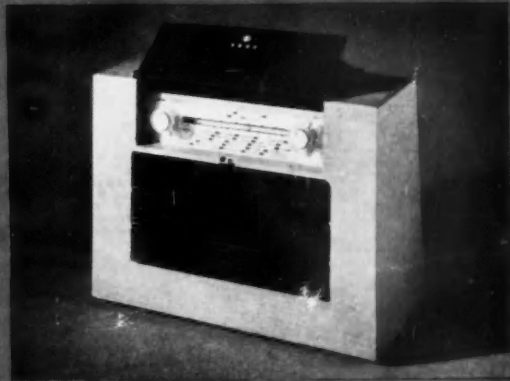




Design

THE MAGAZINE FOR MANUFACTURERS, DESIGNERS AND RETAILERS



JANUARY 1952 NUMBER 37

The Council of Industrial Design

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NUMBER 37

JANUARY 1952

Design

The monthly journal for manufacturers, designers and retailers, published for the Council of Industrial Design and the Scottish Committee of the Council

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The Council of Industrial Design

A RETROSPECT BY GORDON RUSSELL

1951 HAS BEEN such an important year for the Council—a year for which we have been preparing at an ever-increasing pace since 1948—that I feel it is not unreasonable at the end of it to indulge in the luxury of looking backwards.

I can suggest no accurate yardstick by which we may measure our progress, in the way that a manufacturer can compare his profit, turnover, units produced and so on. Yet it is valuable to try to make an assessment. I think most manufacturers would agree with me that since the Council was set up in 1944 there has been a change in the atmosphere. Industry no longer regards design as the pet theory of a small group of cranks. By many firms it is now taken seriously as a vital aspect of production. Trade papers which hardly mentioned the subject before the war have well-informed articles on it today. It even features in the national press and in many women's magazines. Foreign countries too are showing interest in British work in this field.

Our magazine DESIGN, which starts its fourth year this month, has steadily increased its circulation and now has subscribers in 42 countries. We are proud of the fact that 2,000 copies of the present number have been purchased by our friends, the Instituut Industriële Vormgeving: they propose to add eight pages of Dutch news before circulating among industrialists in Holland. Many large firms find that it is well worth taking several copies so as to ensure rapid circulation. Joseph Lucas, for instance, take 26. Any firm which is considering bringing its design policy up to date can find no better way of interesting managerial staff beforehand—an essential preliminary—than sending them a copy of DESIGN regularly.

Stimulation of demand for well-designed goods is as important as stimulating the supply of them. In this field the Council can claim that it has made a good deal of headway with retailers. Courses for retail staff have been well supported, and exhibitions in shops have broken much new ground, bringing well-designed goods into the shopper's own familiar surroundings. But for spectacular figures

one must note attendances at selective exhibitions either wholly or partly organised by the Council or its Scottish Committee, from "Britain Can Make It" 1946, "Enterprise Scotland" 1947, "Design Fair" 1948 and 1949, through more than 80 smaller ones to the Festival of Britain 1951. The total is not far short of 14 million people.

In the six official 1951 Festival exhibitions, the Council was responsible for the selection of all industrial exhibits, over 10,000 of them, and the Council's Design Advice Service proved valuable in selecting display and other designers. I claim that the general standard of exhibits was good and that, far from antagonising manufacturers, it demonstrated the value of the selective method. At the end of 1951 our relations with industry, as a whole, have never been better, and our pictorial card index, Design Review, has been launched as a permanent feature of

our work. Our 1951 Design Congress was oversubscribed by top-rank business men who were anxious to attend. Such a situation could hardly have happened seven years ago!

The design of the best British products is very good indeed, but there are still few trades in which the majority of firms are as design-conscious as they should be, if Britain is to get as much export trade as she might. It is significant that people who used to refer to us as long-haired dreamers, even morons, have been strangely silent of late! I am encouraged by such signs to believe that 1951 has seen the turn of the tide and to hope that each year a growing number of business men will say of me:

I have great comfort from this fellow

Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him.

But I trust they will no longer add, aside with Gonzalo, "His complexion is perfect gallows"!

Notebook

DURING THE SUMMER, one of Scandinavia's leading industrial-design critics, Arthur Hald, Editor of *Form* and *Kontur*, spent some time in Britain, visiting Festival exhibitions and meeting designers and manufacturers. One result of his visit is to be seen in the current number of *Form* (No. 7/1951), which devotes fourteen pages and its front cover to an illustrated survey of design in this country. Mr Hald has studied his subject closely and knowledgeably. One of the important differences between British and Scandinavian industrial design, in his opinion, is that here, though "theoretically 'everything is made for the consumer,' . . . in fact he is not so open to influence and so easy to reach as the producer, the seller and the designer. That is why the problems of industrial design [in Britain] are more often treated from the latter standpoints. . . . Materials and productive methods are analysed, but less attention is paid to functional problems and the consumers' everyday habits. And the designer seems to be isolated, for close collaboration between producers and artists—the latter with 100 per cent responsibility—is rather rare."

These are some more of Mr Hald's points (quoted from *Form*'s English summary of his article):

Progressive designers and producers in Britain have to contend not only with conservatism in general, and with

wide class-differences, but also with the heterogeneous demands of a world-wide market. . . .

Council of Industrial Design propaganda is almost wholly concerned with series- and mass-production—a situation considerably different from that obtaining in Scandinavia, where the interplay between machine techniques, handicraft and even homecraft is an everyday commonplace.

Many British firms produce excellent examples of modern industrial design, but current design policy seems to put just a bit too much emphasis on "sales appearance." . . .

In the domestic milieu . . . the British, in an almost irritating way, only half-succeed. . . . The fact is that [they] do not seem to concentrate on functional problems. Too often, furniture exhibitions seem to be planned "in the air," presenting items remote from everyday human needs. Or they offer purely decorative arrangements instead of concentrating upon the solution of general problems.

Though Arthur Hald's "final conclusion was that 1951 in Britain was something of a Victory Year for contemporary design," he evidently thinks that we should not cease from mental fight.

WE SUGGESTED, last month, that by deliberately designing for economy it should be possible even today to produce a car which was cheap and not nasty. We are glad to see that no less an authority than *The Engineer* shares this view. A leading article in its issue of 16 November expresses the hope—"perhaps optimistically—that some novel and unorthodox approach



DESIGN FOR DISPLAY. Many readers of *DESIGN* will already be familiar with the Denby stoneware produced by Joseph Bourne and Sons Ltd. Now this and the firm's other wares can be seen in a new setting—a showroom designed by Robert Wetmore of Cockade Ltd, described on page 16. One alcove is shown above; the wallpaper is John Minton's design for Line's, illustrated on our cover last month.
 Photograph by Marshall and Co (Nottingham) Ltd.

to the old but nevertheless difficult problem of designing a satisfactory small 'economy' car will be made. It can, no doubt, be argued that the price of a car is fixed less by its design than by the cost of raw materials. . . . The latter is, indeed, of major importance. But if a designer can cut down the dimensions and the weight of a car to a practical minimum which will not too much affect the performance and the road-holding properties of the vehicle, then the saving of material can reduce the price in almost direct proportion."

The Engineer continues: "The design of a small car allows the designer more freedom than might at first glance be supposed to be available. For there is no need to adhere to some orthodox pattern, since buyers would probably accept any honest functional shape providing it served the desired purpose and was relatively cheap. This freedom of choice applies not only to the general layout but to practically all major details. . . ."

A FACT WHICH adds to the interest of the article in this issue by the head of the industrial design studios of E. K. Cole Ltd is that Coles are not only manufacturers of Ekco radio and television sets but have also an important plastic moulding section. They manufacture and in some instances design mouldings for other firms—both in and out of the radio industry—as well as for their own use.

THIS PARAGRAPH attracted our attention in the recent Productivity Report on *Education for Management*: "Because of the great social and intellectual prestige attaching to the highest positions in business [in the United States], many of the best students choose business as a career. There is a growing recognition of the social rôle which business plays and of the responsibilities of business leaders to the community." The implications for industrial design are, we think, obvious.

A. D.

KITSCH

The sham art of commercialised romance is remote alike from honest vulgarity and from good contemporary design. Recent exhibitions in England and Holland have shown up the underlying conflict between them



AT ONE OF the retail salesmen's courses at Attingham Park recently, an interesting question was posed. "The small exhibition here no doubt represents what the Council of Industrial Design considers a reasonable design standard. Would it not add to its value greatly if things of bad design were shown alongside the good ones?" A Council representative replied that he knew of very few shops indeed where the gap could not be filled with the greatest ease, and the whole course took it laughingly in good part. The real problem is to encourage people to look and to form their own tastes by comparison. Certainly we would be very much against any attempt to avoid the necessity for thought by supplying guides who said, "The Council says this is good! The Council says this is bad!" Black is seldom jet black, and how often is white spotless?

The exhibition "Black Eyes and Lemonade" at the Whitechapel Art Gallery showed ornamental articles, some of astonishing beauty and some trash. All were things which ordinary people have bought not because they are really necessary but because they have some element of delight, of that fairy-tale world into which all of us, however grown-up, like to retreat at times. When that happens artists should note the public's choice with respect, and try to find out what is behind it. We are all entitled to our foibles. At heart most of us love genuine vulgarity, the vulgarity

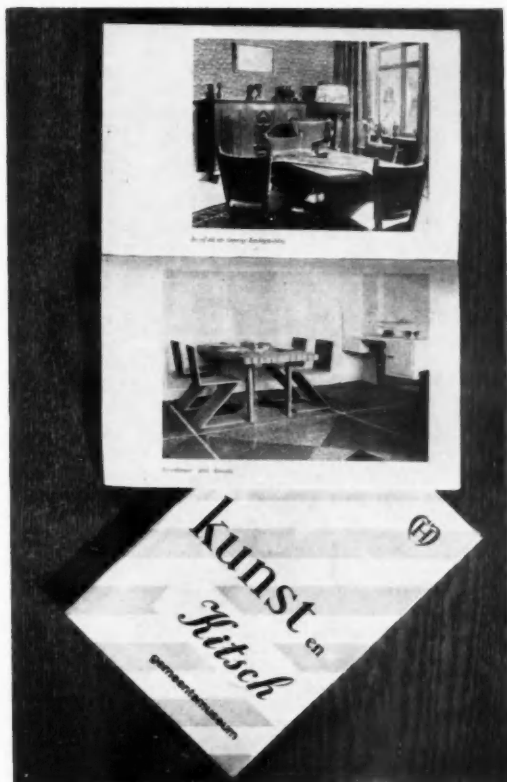
"At heart most of us love genuine vulgarity, . . . the unashamed exuberance of the ordinary bloke." Hence the popularity of the recent "Black Eyes and Lemonade" exhibition of popular art, in which the Punch and Judy show above, painted by the late Professor Rose of Bungay, Suffolk, about 1920, was one of the exhibits. The exhibition was arranged in association with the Society for Education in Art and the Arts Council and organised by Barbara Jones and Tom Ingram, at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London.

of the circus playbill and the cut-glass-and-mahogany pub. It is the unashamed exuberance of the ordinary bloke, not to be confused with the sodden vulgarity of soul which we can count on seeing in Messrs —'s windows in any biggish town.

So a small exhibition "*Kunst en Kitsch*"* at The Hague was of very real interest. In this, the Dutch dared greatly in showing good and bad side by side. But if ever a people has suffered from seeing displayed at home the kind of rubbish which tourists are supposed to crave—and certainly buy—surely it must be the Dutch. How humiliating to see their fine sabots, made to be worn by real gardeners, tricked out with tenth-rate painted posies or windmills and sold at six times the price! As W. H. Gispen says in his introduction to the catalogue: "What about the hare in its armchair of brightly coloured and glazed earthenware, with a slit between its ears for your toothbrush. The brass umbrella stand, with Rembrandt's 'Night Watch' impressed in relief; the upturned farmer's-cap of earthenware, or the miniature WC, both of them to be used as ashtrays. The village souvenir, consisting of a slice of birchwood in its bark frame and covered with a shiny bit of paper showing a brightly coloured photograph of the town hall with a goblin smoking a pipe on the steps."

There were also, in the exhibition, some excellent examples of contemporary design and of old things of various kinds: it was made quite clear that the exhibition was no attempt to persuade people to discard heirlooms in order to be "up-to-the-minute." Yet one could not help feeling that just as the revolting ornaments, brassware, furniture, lampshades and embroidery screamed at one that the customer is always right, so some of the contemporary things overstated their case and screamed that the customer is always wrong! One extreme begets another. The commercialising of romance leads sometimes to the baldly-stated reaction that a chair is merely an object to sit on, not even to sit on with comfort. But how can the background of commercially successful *Kitsch* make for sweet reasonableness? Surely there are many good things in Dutch shops. Would it not have been

* Art and Sham-art

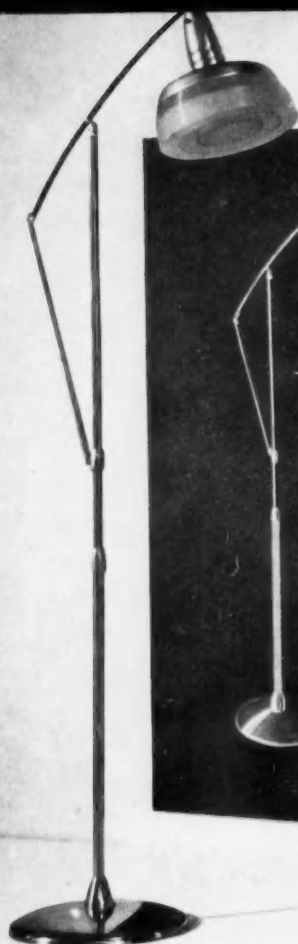


Two typical illustrations and the front cover of a booklet produced in connection with the *Kunst en Kitsch* exhibition at The Hague. The organisers, greatly daring, showed good and bad design side by side—Kitsch being represented by revolting ornaments, souvenirs, brassware, furniture, lampshades, embroidery, etc. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of the contrast was somewhat reduced because "some of the contemporary things overstated their case."

possible to select these, instead of getting architects to design special furniture, which, it appears, cannot be bought in quantity in shops and therefore is neither an answer to the public nor an encouragement to the retailer?

More than 30,000 people visited this stimulating little show in the Gemeentemuseum. The Dutch are not a specially exhibition-conscious people—normally not more than 4,000 turn up at such exhibitions—so this figure is far more impressive than it sounds. We shall watch the results of this bold experiment with close attention.

G. R.



DESIGN FEATURES

UPPER COLUMN SLIDES IN LOWER ONE. MIN. HEIGHT 4'-6" MAX. HEIGHT 6'-0"
 VERTICAL MOVEMENT OF LAMP ACTUATED BY SLIDE ON UPPER COLUMN.
 LAMP REVOLVES THROUGH 360° HORIZONTALLY.
 LAMP FREELY SUSPENDED UP TO HORIZONTAL POSITION OF CROSS-TIE.
 SHADE DESIGNED TO GIVE CONCENTRATED AREA OF LIGHT WITHOUT GLARE.
 TWO-WAY SWITCH INCORPORATED IN SHADE.
 FINISH - STANDARD IN STAINLESS STEEL. LOWER COLUMN COVERED WITH
 LEATHER. LAMP CARRYING REFLECTOR IN ALUMINIUM ANODIZED IVORY ON
 OUTSIDE. LOWER PART OF SHADE IN CREAM COLOURED POLYTHENE.

DESIGNED PARTICULARLY FOR USE WITH TELEVISION RECEIVER.

ADJUSTABLE FLOOR STANDARD



From a recent exhibition of Central School students' work: an adjustable standard lamp, above, designed particularly for use with television sets. Some of the positions to which it can be adjusted are shown in the diagrams on the display panel. The shade has been designed to give a concentrated area of light without glare and has a two-way switch incorporated in the shade, which is in ivory-coloured anodised aluminium and cream polythene. The standard is of stainless steel and the lower part of the column is leather covered. The designer was Alan Bednall, an Industrial Art Bursary winner (in the Electric Light Fittings section) in 1951.

The sideboard, left, has sliding doors and removable trays. It is in olive, ash and mahogany and was designed by J. Padiak.

THE CENTRAL SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

"It can claim to have been the first school in the world to show an understanding of the relationship between the designer and the machine"

by William Johnstone, *Principal*

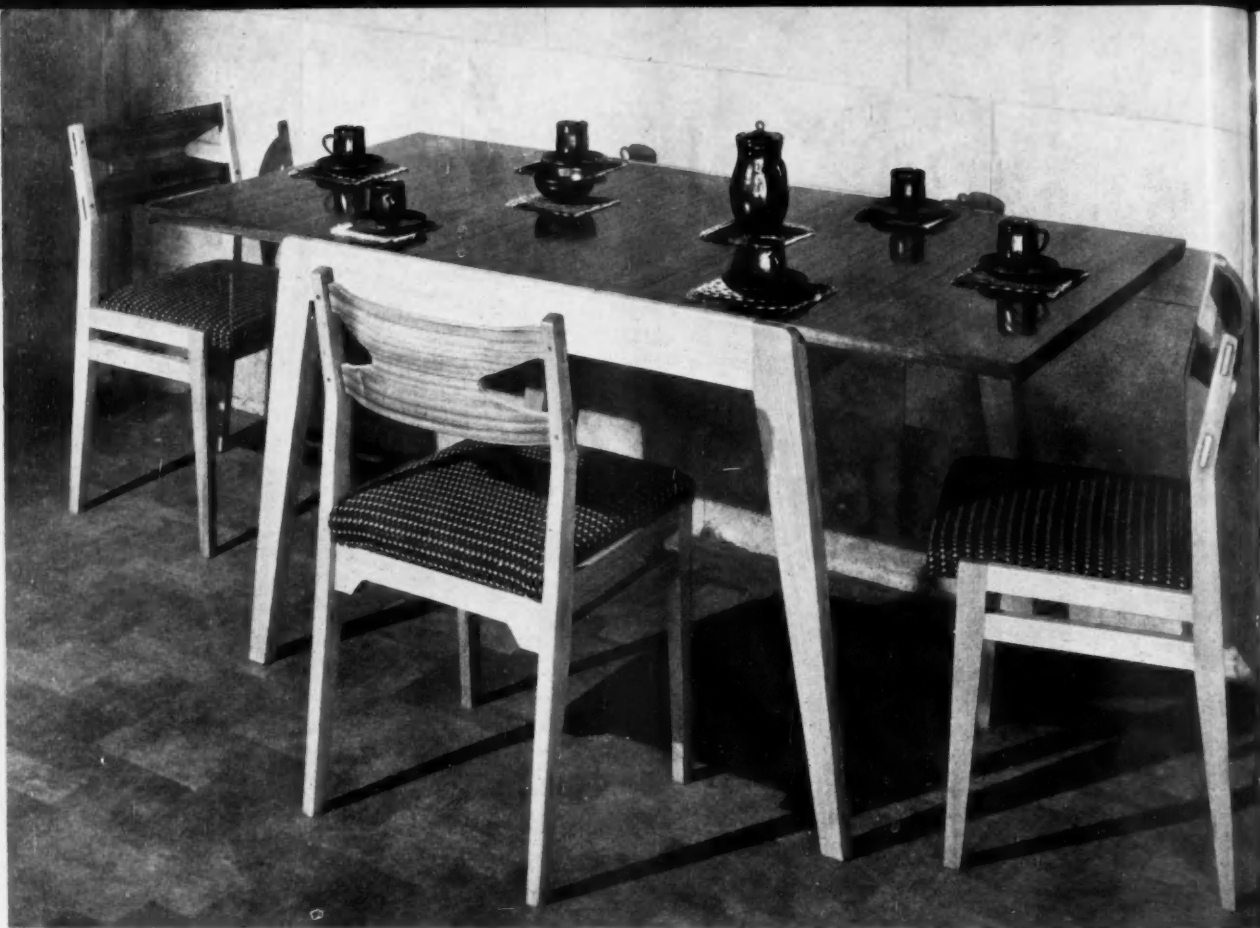
PALEOLITHIC MAN enjoyed painting for 25,000 years; a golden age for painters. Painting has its function: the expression of reflection and vision. Neolithic man was a maker of tools and utensils; he learnt the use of metals, discovered the wheel, and entered the world of movement. I suggest that our Industrial Revolution marks the beginning of the New Scientific Neolithic Age. In our world there is vast opportunity for creative intelligence. There has never been a greater need for artists, designers, technologists and craftsmen.

It was with the conscious aim of filling a definite gap in art education that the London County Council Central School of Arts and Crafts (to give its correct, rather cumbersome title) was founded in 1896. Its first principal was W. R. Lethaby. Its aim was to supplement the training in the fine arts given by other art schools, and to function as a link between art training and industry. The original prospectus of 1896 stated that the School "provides for apprentices, pupils and workmen engaged in, or connected with, artistic handicrafts, the best instruction in art and design as applied to their particular industries. . . . The special business of the school is the industrial

application of decorative design, and the students are expected to concentrate their studies on the several branches of the industries in which they are engaged." Throughout the history of the school, apprentices and

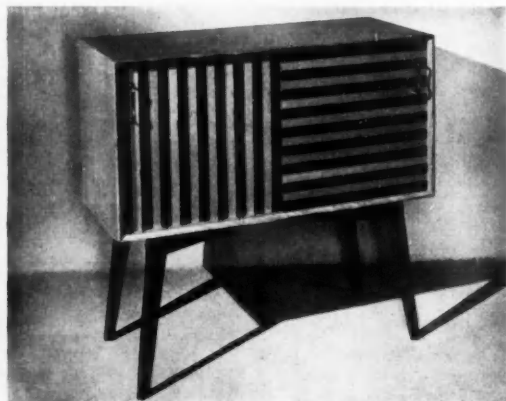


The domestic oil stove, right, was designed by Anthony Mann, who was an Industrial Art Bursary winner in 1950. (His design for a combined open fire, cooker, water heater and warm cupboard was illustrated in DESIGN, March 1950, page 31). The photograph is from a model, approximately 5 in. high.



Students' designs for furniture and pottery. Above, extending dining table and chairs in beech with walnut-veneered backs. Designer, F. Wegeirski. Dark rust-brown stoneware coffee set designed by Innes Reich.

The birch and cherry sideboard, below, was designed by W. Jarem.



practising workers from many parts of the world have been among its most important students, and every opportunity has been taken to instil in these craftsmen a sense of appreciation of good design.

The Central School is no factory, nor a vocational training centre; its workshops and studios are the arena of experiment and adventure in new art forms relating to this industrial age. It can claim to have been the first school in the world to show an understanding of the relationship between the designer and the machine. The idea behind the founding of the school spread to Germany—indirectly, to the *Bauhaus*.

Indeed, it may fairly be said that modern art colleges throughout the world having relations with industry have, directly or indirectly, taken their pattern from the Central School of Arts and Crafts.

Lethaby had faith in the modern designer. He believed that the home itself and everything in it should

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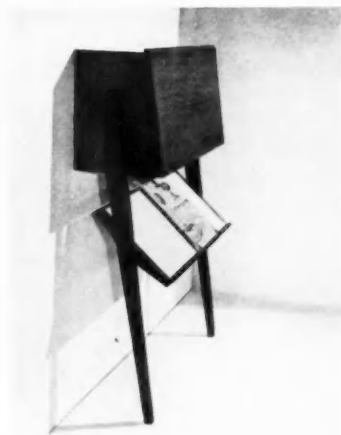
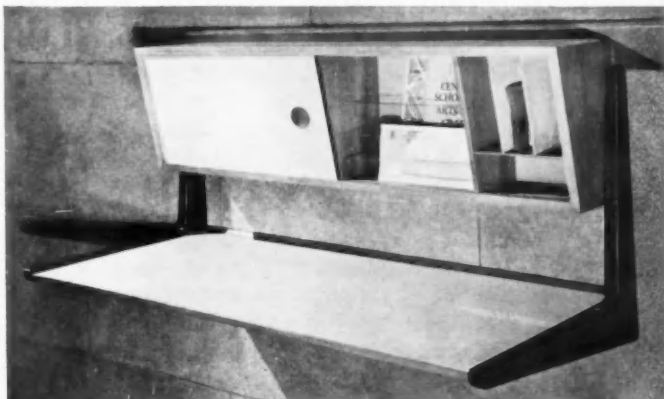
Des



"The School's workshops and studios are the arena of experiment and adventure in new art forms relating to this industrial age."

Above: solid-fuel stove by R. D. Carter, Industrial Art Bursary winner in 1951.

Right, top to bottom: wall desk by Helen Riehm which was one of the exhibits in the 1951 Exhibition of London Education held at County Hall during November and December; two-legged writing desk by A. Galwin, shown open and shut; nursery chair and table in birch plywood and mansonite, by J. Padiak. All three furniture designs use Formica veneers.



be beautifully designed—down to the smallest and cheapest machine-made article. Here he differed from his friend and patron William Morris, who saw no future in new machinery without new men. Lethaby reckoned that science and modern industry gave the artist new opportunities.

The recent increase in attention devoted to the relation of art to industry has arisen largely as a consequence of rapid shrinkage of the field of employment available to artists, following the decline in private patronage of the fine arts. But this state of affairs was well understood and foreseen by the founders of the Central School in the 'nineties; realisation of the relation between art and society is no novelty for the Central.

At present the School offers a three-year course, with Diploma, and later, following a period of experience in industry, a Fellowship. Many alterations and adjustments have been made in details of



the course since the syllabus was originally planned, but its essentials remain the same. We have been happy in that we have had the continuing support of manufacturers and industrial concerns, the trade unions, the Ministry of Education, London County Council, and the Council of Industrial Design.

Senior art teaching is seriously handicapped by the aesthetic backwardness of most students entering art schools at 17 or 18: their first years have usually to be spent laboriously in picking up an A B C. Their poverty of expression is in striking contrast to the richness of the junior child. What is wanted of the adolescent is his child's vision plus a dawning sense of values arising from new and real experience. Hence general art-school training is far too much concerned, as a rule, with tedious exercises in irrelevant or pedantic subjects (many of which, in any case, should now be within the province of every child's ordinary academic education, if indeed they are necessary at all).

However, the very fact that the average art student's aesthetic poverty has always to be kept in mind makes it the more important that we should take scrupulous care to evoke and respect his vital interests. The system whereby the art teacher is in constant attendance, correcting, advising and criticising, gives a student little chance of tackling real problems. In the end and as a result, he can often only repeat a formula. He has no analytical approach; he has hardly been set a problem calling forth his powers.

An important function of the art school which undertakes to train industrial designers is to act as an experimental laboratory at the service of manufacturers. It should not only be a place where the fresh ideas and enthusiasms of the students can be given practical expression, where experiments and adventures in new materials and techniques can be carried out and sought; but also a place where interchange of thoughts and opinions between manufacturers and young designers can take place continuously. In America such a policy is much more the norm than in Britain, and there great and mutual benefits accrue.

At the Central, before the student specialises in his chosen field, there are facilities for him to work in different media, be it fresco, pottery or weaving, and it is found that this re-orientation keeps his ideas fluid.

I feel strongly that it is of the greatest importance that, linked with the student's research into the possibilities of media, there should be a thorough training in drawing and painting, and this before any specialisation. The essence of the training of a designer is that it should give him complete confidence in the use of his eyes and hands. All mechanical inventions stem from the use of the hands, and are, essentially, extensions of primitive devices to ease man's labour. It should be insisted meanwhile that design here is not necessarily originality, certainly not self-expression; indeed, attempts at self-expression before technique has been mastered would result in the student's early



The catalogue for the London County Council's 1951 open-air sculpture exhibition was designed by Harold Bartram of the Central School of Arts and Crafts. This spread consists of a text page printed on blue paper, facing the first page of an art-paper section of illustrations.

Work by the School's Book Production Department has previously been illustrated in DESIGN, July 1950, page 30.

The photographs at foot of page 6, foot of page 8, and on page 9, are by Alfred Lammer, instructor in the School's photographic department. Other photographs accompanying this article (including the colour photograph on facing page) were specially taken for DESIGN by George Tanner, ARPS.



"At the Central, before the student specialises, there are facilities for him to work in different media. . . . It is of the greatest importance that there should be a thorough training in drawing and painting." Stained glass window by Robert Sowers.

discomfiture. It is by conscious trial and error, by impersonal investigation rather than by displays of "personality," that the student grows, adapts, improves; thus his originality comes without self-consciousness. As Leonardo said, "poor is the student who does not surpass his master."

My reason for insisting on a basic training in the fine arts is that fine art is, among other things, a technique of selection and isolation. It reveals criteria of proportion and form; it is the most exacting training for the eyes; it provides the student with a background of taste. It is this culture which enables him to seize

upon good design of any period, especially his own. While his eyes are opening, his intelligence is being trained to grasp meanings behind the evolution of design. "There is no result in nature without a cause; understand the cause and you will have no need of the experiment."

To the young designer, design should imply knowledge; knowledge of the potentialities and limitations of the particular machine which will be used in making a particular product, the materials to be used and their possibilities, the cost of raw materials and labour, and the final price to the consumer. The economic factor is of the greatest importance, and I do not think that at the present time students can have enough of it. We spend much interest and concentration on the "art" of design, far too little on other essential factors. The young textile designer, for instance, should not only spend time in the factory seeing the works, but also time in the managerial departments getting the feel of the market. Knowledge of tariffs, for example, helps the designer to assess relative values of materials, so that he is able to produce in particular terms that article of better quality and design which will ride the tariff and still sell below the native prices. In this real climate, real designing grows.

Thus students should study changing social and economic conditions—those conditions which have demanded, and still demand, appropriate inventions. Students should learn to distinguish between such facts as that the umbrella has remained much the same because the reasons for its invention have not changed, and that the disappearance of the Edwardian house with its staff of servants has created an almost unlimited demand for simple domestic labour-saving devices.

In Britain we have a heritage of beauty in useful things from bridges to water-cisterns; we have today a great wealth of talented young people who, given suitable training and encouragement, could easily design marketable products for the world. The teacher of art and industrial design who trains his students in the finest tradition of real art meets the need of manufacturers who are trying to give their customers the best they can make. We have seen, even in these short post-war years, an increase in the number of firms willing to adventure in design, and we are beginning to see, on the part of the public, an appreciation of adventure.

Radio and television cabinets

a practical approach: by J. K. White, MA (Cantab), MSIA*

THERE IS today no lack of interest in industrial design but there is still, I feel, a long way to go before it can be claimed that contemporary design has really sold itself to the man in the street. In fact there is very little truly contemporary design to be seen, most present-day design being a cleaned-up and simplified version of traditional forms. People's tastes change very slowly, and what they are prepared to admire in a window, showroom or exhibition in its right environment is not necessarily what they will choose for their homes, against the background of their present furniture. It may well be that contemporary design in the smaller items of domestic equipment will not get anywhere until contemporary furniture is more

generally accepted. We seem today to be in a transition stage between one world of design generally admitted to be dying (but taking a remarkably long time about it) and another world struggling to be born. There is still a gap to be bridged between the perfectionist design expert and the practical-minded user of design who is manufacturing goods for a mass market.

How to meet objections all along the line without sacrificing too much of the original concept is the crux of the designer's problem today. To show how one studio and one company tackle this problem may be of

* Head of Industrial Design Studios, E. K. Cole Ltd.





The plastic cabinet, above, was designed around the chassis already used in the wooden cabinet, left. "To produce something different . . . using an existing chassis layout" is not an ideal course, but it is sometimes necessary.

more immediate value than further ideas on what is "good" design or another round in the battle of Contemporary *v.* Traditional.

In the design of radio receivers there are, in my experience, four ways in which the problem may be approached. Before any sort of design "drill" can be evolved, it is well to be clear as to which of the four is to be adopted. They are:

1: *Appearance first*: to produce something new and unusual, looking different from our own or competitors' previous models.

This method is usually adopted by firms who do not employ staff designers. A freelance designer may produce a very pleasing design which the manufacturer considers worth using, though usually many engineering problems have to be overcome because of the designer's lack of technical knowledge.

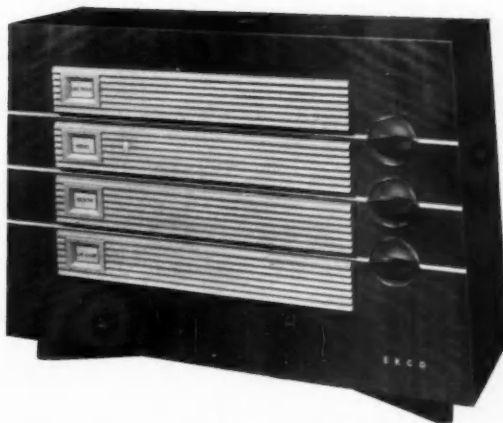
2: *Adaptation*: to modify an existing receiver—to produce something different in appearance though using an existing chassis layout.

This is often unsatisfactory because the original model was, naturally, the best the designer could

produce. Subsequent titivating is generally detrimental, and the new model seldom looks as good as the old.

3: *Appearance and technical considerations together*: to use a new chassis, meeting electrical and engineering requirements at all stages of development.

This, the ideal method, is generally used where staff designers are employed. The designer in these instances knows the problems of the engineers, cabinet



The appearance of this set was given full consideration from the outset. By developing the design "in consultation with everyone concerned," it was possible to evolve a chassis to fit the cabinet—instead of a cabinet to fit the chassis.

First production model of an Ekco television console, left; and the current version (TC 166). Improved appearance results from the attention which has been given to small details of design.

makers, and sales department, and he is experienced in keeping cost at the required level. The design is developed in consultation with everyone concerned.

4: *Technical (i.e. engineering and electrical) considerations first*: to design a chassis, and then a cabinet to put round it.

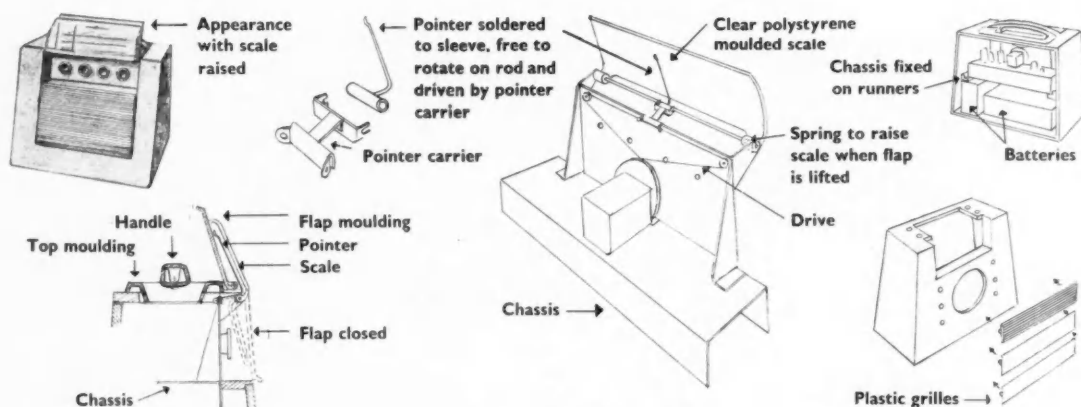
There are many receivers on the market designed in this way. They are easily recognisable by the experienced designer; usually they can be seen for a very long time in dealers' windows.

Having decided, as we nearly always do at Ekco, on Approach No. 3, we come to the procedure which will give effect to it, to the equal satisfaction of designer, engineer and sales executive and, ultimately, of salesman, dealer and public . . . or as near this as possible.

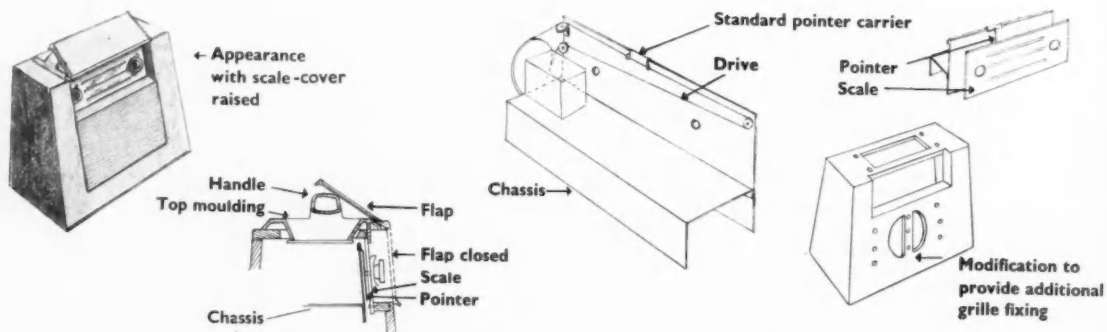
There are, of course, occasions on which Approach No. 3 cannot be adopted: when, for example, sales requirements demand a "repeat" of a set which has proved popular, or when a plastic cabinet has to be designed to replace a wooden one, using the same chassis layout. But for the evolution of a completely new set the following procedure has, I consider, proved itself in practice.

It is assumed, in outlining this "drill," that the cabinet designer's technical knowledge will be sufficient to give him a clear idea of the kind of chassis layout needed to meet the requirements of the new model (which will usually have been stated by Management or Sales). He need not be an electrical engineer, but he must know the possible sizes and shapes of chassis necessary to meet a given requirement. As-

1: Original conception



2: Simplified version



suming that he does, the procedure will follow these lines:

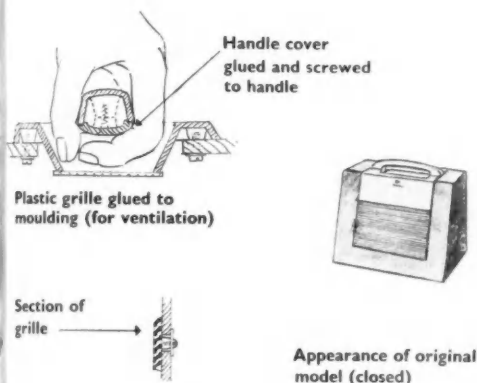
- (a) Doodling for a new idea—the longest part of the job.
- (b) Layout of possible chassis in the selected doodled cabinet.
- (c) Consultation with engineers to find any snags and to make sure that the chassis will be of satisfactory size to accommodate the necessary components.
- (d) Consideration of drive mechanism, scale and illumination.
- (e) Position of speaker for best acoustic results.
- (f) Preparation of plans, elevations and colour-wash perspectives for presentation to Management Committee. Four or more possible designs are usually prepared.

- (g) Selection of two or more of these designs to be “mocked-up.”
- (h) Preparation of working drawings of all parts to enable the mock-ups to be made.
- (i) Presentation of mock-ups to Management, who will either make a definite choice at this stage or suggest possible amendments to one or more of the designs, to be seen again when the amendments have been tried out.

The fact remains that there is no effective compromise between *avant-garde* and conventional design. Unless a manufacturer is prepared to lose sales, he has to cater for the majority, and the majority tend to play safe with traditional design rather than take a chance on something new and different.

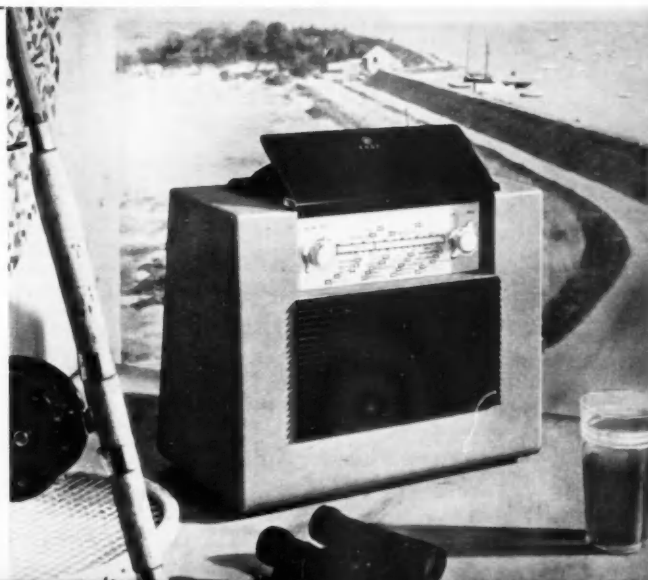
With some types of receiver—especially radiograms, which are not usually made in such large quantities as to require mass-production of their cabinets—it is possible to house the works in a cabinet of good contemporary design, made in small quantities, for the growing minority of people who choose furniture in contemporary style; and in another cabinet which will satisfy the more conservative taste of the majority. If consideration is given to proportion, texture, colour and freedom from fussy ornamentation, the conventional design can still present an honest, clean and unpretentious appearance.

This is, in practice, the best that can be done with traditional and popular conceptions of design. It is also the least that *should* be done. The risk of being a little ahead in design should be taken occasionally in the same pioneering spirit that has produced many technical advances which have become generally accepted.



Conservative tastes in furniture have had little effect on the design of portable radio sets, which, unlike the larger models, are not regarded as pieces of furniture.

Here, the first sequence of diagrams shows a portable mains/battery set as originally envisaged by its designer (the author of the article above). The second sequence shows modifications which were necessary for ease of production—to enable the set to be marketed at an economic price. Although the production model (right) differs somewhat in appearance from the designer's first model when the scale is raised, in the closed position the two are virtually identical.



SHOWROOM

in a Pottery

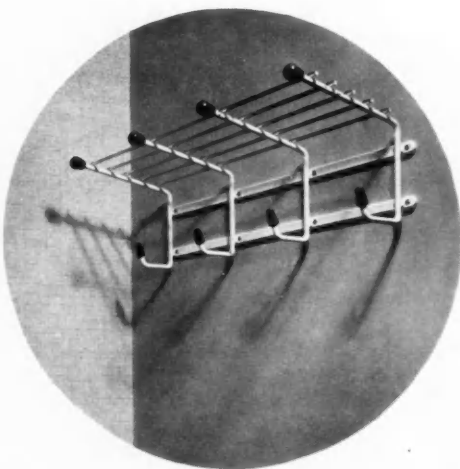
LIKE MANY OTHER British factories, the Denby Pottery of Joseph Bourne and Sons Ltd, near Derby, grew piecemeal over a long period—until there were 20 floor-levels in different parts of the premises. At this stage, the firm decided that rebuilding, rather than further extension, was called for. This has now been completed;* and it has provided an opportunity for incorporating, for the first time, a showroom in contemporary style.

Having seen and admired the work of Cockade Ltd in a Guinness stand at the B I F, Bournes commissioned them to design the showroom: a commission which was extended to take in the entrance hall, an anteroom, and the staircases and corridors leading to the room (which is on the second floor) as well as the showroom itself.

* Architects: Wood, Goldstraw and Yorath, of Stoke-on-Trent.



Above, the centre partition of the showroom. The partition wall is of woven raffia cloth, the carpet of grey felt. The armchair, supplied by Heal's, is upholstered in a Tibor fabric. Among the standard products which Cockade have used elsewhere in these premises are Heal and Ernest Race chairs, John Line wallpapers, paper shades by Le Klint and a number of Troughton and Young's Versalite and Ultralux light fittings—some in their normal form, and others specially modified. Between showroom and anteroom, there is a curtain of Heal's Calyx fabric, designed by Lucienne Day (DESIGN, August 1951, page 21).



The special fittings designed and made by Cockade Ltd for the new premises of the Denby Pottery include (left) a wall-frame for pots and foliage, on the staircase leading to the showroom; and (above) a hat rack (designer, D. H. McKay) in metal. The crossbars are polished brass, the other parts stove-enamelled white, with mahogany finials.

What America is buying today

"BRITISH MANUFACTURERS have missed many millions of pounds' worth of business from the United States since the war by giving too much attention to reproduction designs and too little to contemporary." This is the opinion of Antony Hunt, Editor of the Condé Nast publication, *House and Garden*, London, who recently returned from a month's visit to the States, during which he studied the methods of his colleagues in the American Condé Nast organisation, renewed acquaintance with many leading designers, decorators and architects, and visited retail stores in and around New York.

Mr Hunt is fully aware of the difficulties facing the British manufacturer of furniture or fabrics who wants to build up a steady business in the American market—as a former design director of Edinburgh Weavers, he has too much first-hand knowledge of this subject to be likely to underestimate its importance. But he believes that, despite the cosmopolitan origins of the American people, many Americans have a bias in favour of British goods which this country has failed to exploit, because British manufacturers (with a few conspicuous exceptions) have not kept pace with the trend of American demand.

The latest figures quoted at the time of Antony Hunt's visit to the States indicated that 62½ per cent of the furniture being made there was "definitely modern" in style. In addition, modern furniture is being imported from Scandinavia and from Italy, and, of course, from the more progressive British manufacturers; which implies the existence of a correspondingly large demand for fabrics and accessories of equally modern character.

When the Modern Movement first reached the States from Europe, it was greeted with such over-enthusiasm and accepted in such an undigested form that there came, in the mid-1930's, a reaction in favour of period styles; but the main force of that reaction, Mr Hunt emphasises, is now spent. The modern style has been assimilated into American production, partly through the presence in America of such pioneers of the European movement as Gropius, Chermayeff and Breuer, and in the textile field Marion Dorn and Dorothy Liebes; partly, also, through the development of taste and technique in

America's consumer-goods industries during the war, which was stimulated by the enforced absence of imported goods, at a time when British industry was diverted almost entirely to war production.

In the New York department stores, the result is seen in whole floors devoted to well-designed contemporary furniture and fabrics, not as exclusive items but in every price-range. Even in chain stores of the Woolworth category, Antony Hunt noticed many charming and well-designed accessories; for example, plastic table-mats in an excellent range of colours, and simple lamps and lampshades.

Some of the influences which, he considers, have helped to secure widespread acceptance for contemporary styles in the States over the last few years, are:

1: *The design-consciousness shown by the present generation of retail store buyers—men and women who have travelled widely, who know the capitals and the leading designers of Europe, and keep in touch with trends of design in all its manifestations.*

The sales-people too "live in the manner of the things they sell; they do not try to promote contemporary furniture while wearing frock coats and Victorian wing collars; they are, in fact, contemporary-minded men and women, understanding and selling contemporary merchandise."

2: *The influence of professional interior decorators.* In the States, they occupy a position without parallel in this country. They are widely known ("think of names like Robsjohn-Gibbings, Eames and Knoll, for example"); they wield great influence; they are interested in creating styles for today.

3: "The export of antiques—unlike present-day manufactured goods—obeys the law of diminishing returns. We have little enough left here; and prices of good genuine antiques are so high by the time they are landed in America that many people prefer good contemporary design to the alternative of reproductions. It is not without significance that one very prosperous manufacturer of reproduction furniture has contemporary furniture in his own home."

We asked Antony Hunt whether he thought that modern styles would remain in favour in the States, or whether modernity might itself become a fashion that would pass, to be replaced by a revival of some former style. He sees no risk of this; "Americans believe in and support designers who are living; they are not hypnotised by the past. They know they have good design and good designers in their midst now. They do not associate their appreciation of good design always with designers who died before 1837."

It HAS happened here

A furniture shop in an industrial town of 100,000 population has increased its sales of contemporary furniture to 80 per cent of its total business

TWO YEARS AGO, Hemmings Bros (Northampton) Ltd was a typical small provincial furniture shop; its stock, though of good quality, contained no contemporary furniture or furnishings. Today, four-fifths of the company's turnover is in contemporary design—and total sales have risen considerably. The ground floor, including both windows, and most of the first floor have been turned into "contemporary" showrooms; in fact only the inquisitive shopper can find anything else.

The story begins one evening in 1949, when H. F. J. Hemmings heard a broadcast talk by Wyndham Gooden which aroused his latent interest in design. Correspondence with the speaker on the retailer's responsibility for making good design available to the public led him eventually to pay a visit with his soft furnishings buyer to Dunn's of Bromley, where he was deeply impressed by the quality and range of the display and by the readiness of the staff to help another retailer. Soon afterwards the firm made its first tentative purchases of contemporary goods—chiefly textiles. Later, at the 1950 B F M Exhibition,

Mr Hemmings studied a wide selection of new framed-up and upholstered furniture: soon he sampled the work of most manufacturers in this idiom, and opened small accounts with several well-known firms.

He decided, too, that the public must see contemporary furnishings displayed in suitable settings. This led him first to stage a small exhibition at the store (in July 1950) and afterwards to lay out the showroom with room settings in which the wallpapers, drapes, carpets and accessories were chosen with as much care as the main pieces—though without the aid of a professional designer.

The experiment was not expected to bring immediate results; the directors assumed that it would take two or three years to make an impact on the Northampton public. In fact, by the end of 1950 the firm was enjoying heavy sales: before the present recession began, its total sales had gone up by 10 to 15 per cent—and the proportion of "contemporary" sales rose during 1951 from 30 to 80 per cent.

The success of this firm's design policy, as of many



Living-room of a show house at Delapre, Northampton, winner of a national competition for low-cost houses recently held by The Builder. The architects invited Hemmings Bros to put in low-priced contemporary furnishings.



Room settings like this at Hemmings' show that the smaller retailer, with limited space, can still display contemporary furniture to advantage. Hemmings' ground floor contains a number of room corners "ready for use."



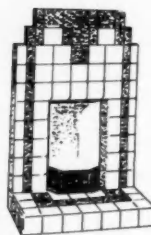
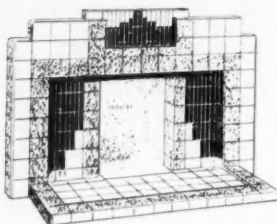
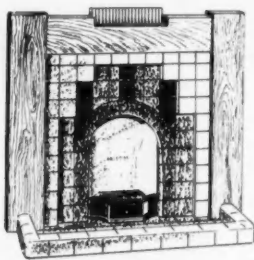
Simple partitions divide the store into display sections. Craft pottery is attractively shown on shelves beneath a canopy.

others, is due largely to the personality and outlook of one man, backed by a small but loyal staff whose enthusiasm has seen the venture through its teething stage. Mr Hemmings is convinced that a shop's staff need to learn about good design and to feel that it is worth selling if the policy is to succeed. Accordingly the sales and buying staff has been encouraged to visit exhibitions in London and elsewhere and to read the several publications that are exhibited in the firm's showroom—including *DESIGN*.

To Mr. Hemmings, good design is much more than bread-and-butter; it is an ideal which rewards those who strive for it with greater satisfaction in their jobs and a closer interest in the business. He is trying

to achieve several important objectives at once; to combine high quality with reasonable prices—below Board of Trade maxima wherever possible; to concentrate on furnishings that appeal to urban industrial workers—young couples in particular; to interest Northampton in pleasant accessories (such as hand-made pottery) which are in keeping with contemporary furniture; and to adopt a design policy covering furnishing textiles and carpets as well as furniture. At a recent CoID course for retail salesmen, he made a plea for more carpet, rug and fabric designs that are cheap, contemporary and suitable for small modern houses. In doing so he put his finger on a key problem in home furnishing today.

JOHN GRAY



Drawings by
Pamela Mara;
photograph by
Dennis Hooker,
AIBP, ARPS.

A New Departure in Planned Design
Introducing Handcrafted Tiles

The CAROLINE
A fireplace for 42" to 54" wide.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.

The DELFT
A fireplace for 42" to 54" wide.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.

The ITCHEN
A fireplace for 42" to 54" wide.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.

The EDEN
A fireplace for 42" to 54" wide.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.

The VANGUARD
A fireplace for 42" to 54" wide.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.
42" to 54" wide, 42" to 54" high.

Aristos FIREPLACES

The Oval for the modern room. A fireplace in glass and decorative panel tiles with charcoal terrazzo surround.
42" wide, 42" high, 42" deep and 42" O.A. projection.

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Aristos FIREPLACES

Progress in fireplace design

THE STORY is told, in Nikolaus Pevsner's *Industrial Art in England*, of a carpet manufacturer who said: "I wish you could tell me who the people are who buy my stuff. I have never been in a house with carpets like that."

Substitute "fireplaces" for "carpets", and the same comment might be made by almost any manufacturer of fireplaces; for in this industry too, the standard of design is low and the relationship between what is made and what some sections of the public want is vague. "From the reactions observed at the South Bank Exhibition it would appear that quite a large percentage of people are able to recognise good designs when they see them, and that they find them desirable, [but] the public cannot choose what it is not shown. Bad design in this field is unfortunately all too common." It was no armchair critic of design who said this, but a fireplace manufacturer—E. R. Kitching, a director of Broad and Co Ltd, Paddington (writing in *The Domestic Equipment Trader*, July 1951). Mr Kitching is well qualified to discuss this subject, since Broads have done at least as much as any other firm to produce better-designed fireplaces in the post-war years.

A general picture of the fireplace industry shows a remarkable diversity in the types and sizes of businesses involved. At one extreme there is the two-men-and-a-backyard firm: little or no plant is needed to manufacture tiled fireplaces as they do not require anything like a mass-production organisation. (The

tiles, which do, are generally bought from outside suppliers.) At the other extreme there are well-known manufacturers who distribute their products on a country-wide basis and support their brand-names by fairly extensive advertising; but these large firms are relatively fewer than in most industries.

Between the two extremes of size there is a majority of medium-sized firms. Broads come into this category. Old-established as builders' merchants, they have for long sold fireplaces, but only since 1936 have they made fireplaces as well. It is probably fair comment to say that their pre-war designs were no better and no worse than most of their competitors'. Since the war, they have taken several smart paces forward—thanks to the conviction of their board of directors that there is scope for something better than the dreary average. They have commissioned such well-known architect-designers as Robert Goodden and John Grey: and, moreover, having commissioned them once, they have come back for more. Most of the new designs have one feature in common—they combine tiles with wood surrounds: mahogany, sycamore and the African walnuts have all been used. This practice brings the fireplace into closer relationship with the wooden furniture of the room in which it is to be installed, and makes it practicable to cater for individual customers' requirements.

In all council housing today, and in most privately-built houses as well, the modern "economy" types of fire are installed. As these fires are of standard widths, and their efficient utilisation demands an opening of standard height, they virtually dictate the sizes of opening which the fireplace-designer can use. Another design problem is to evolve a fireplace to accommodate a projecting solid-fuel stove: Broads have tackled this problem and expect to go into production with their answer, quite soon.

But the improvement of fireplace design, though it is the main point in this story, is not the whole of it. Broads have also had their showroom re-designed by John Grey. Instead of the too-familiar room full of

continued on page 34

The sketches, 1 on facing page, are not caricatures but faithful transcriptions of illustrations in a pre-war Broads' catalogue—and it might not be difficult to find their equals in some fireplace manufacturers' catalogues today.

2 is an opening from Broads' first post-war catalogue. At this stage the standard of fireplace design had taken a sharp turn upward—not so, the standard of catalogue design.

Now Broads' design policy has affected not only their products but also printing and display: the photographs for this booklet, 3, were taken in their own showrooms. The new fireplaces are illustrated in a catalogue which is worthy of them.

A new crane for the Swiss Railways

WHEN AN ARCHITECT designs a building, we assume that he will consider mass, proportion and line—arriving at a result which is aesthetically pleasing as well as functionally sound.

Why should we not assume that the engineer-designer, when designing a new structure, will do the same? This was one of the questions that Hans Hilfiker, a chief engineer of Swiss Federal Railways, considered when he was planning the design of the new crane illustrated here.

Writing in *Werk*, No. 4 of 1951, Mr Hilfiker discusses the engineer's approach to form and his ability to design products which express a civilised quality beyond mere function or material well-being. The engineer's technical products are, like buildings, intended to be used by man, and they too form part of man's surroundings.

Mr Hilfiker compares the architect's outlook and training with the engineer's. Only in bridge-building, where the two professions collaborate, has technology shown any of the civilised quality of architecture, he argues; and we cannot hope for improvement until technical colleges select engineering students with aesthetic sensibility and train them in matters of form—in which the engineer is usually a self-made man.

In the development of the crane, Mr Hilfiker collaborated with the *Ingenieurbüro* Wartmann and Co, of Zurich; it was planned as part of a general improvement in goods transport equipment, aiming at easier interchange of loads between trains and lorries.

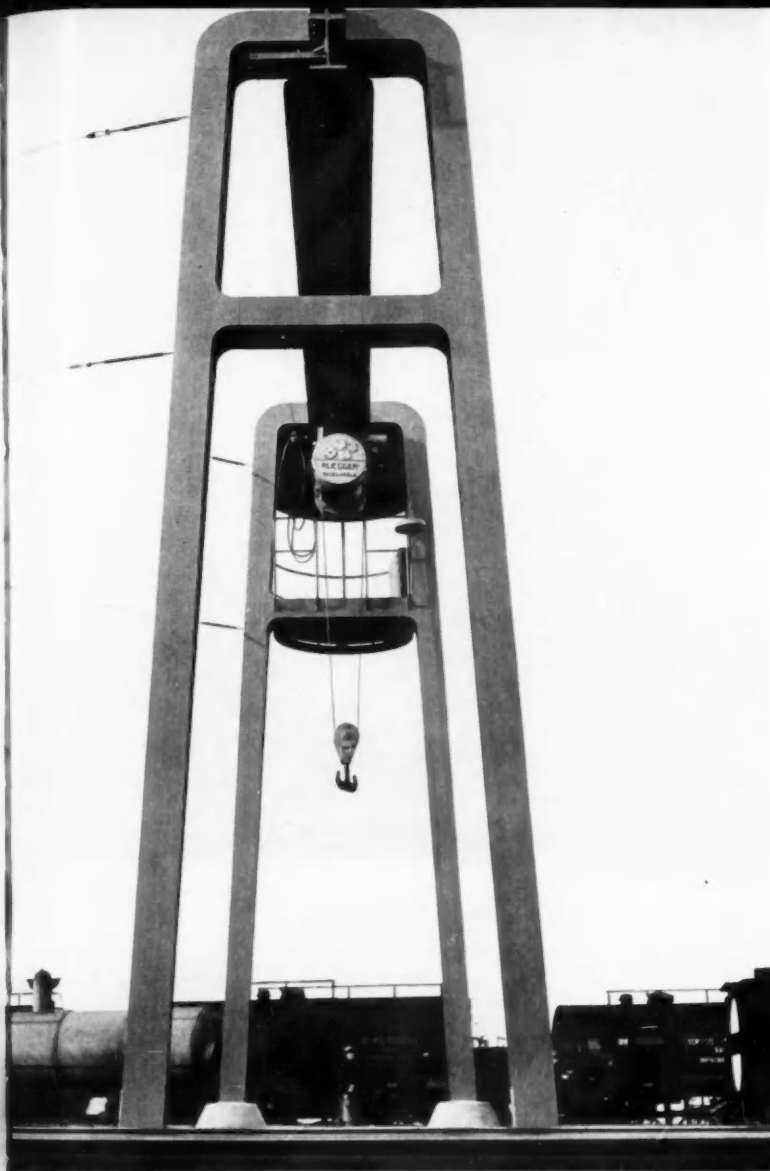
The crane, which has a capacity of 10 tons, spans one railway track and a track for road vehicles alongside, so that loads can easily be transferred. Frequent changes in transport requirements at various stations made it necessary that the crane should be designed for easy removal, though it would be static for the period of its useful life at any point. Its main parts are strong enough to withstand repeated re-erection.

The frame consists of two side supports of welded steel girders, and a transverse girder joining them. This, the main horizontal member, is a broad-flange beam, and an electrically-driven hoist runs on its lower flanges.

At one end, the runway for the hoist extends far enough for it to be sheltered, when not in use, by a roof which is attached to the top of the main support. This roof also covers a platform from which maintenance work can be done on the hoist. Here, too, in a sheet-metal box, the necessary gear for power control and distribution is housed. The platform is reached from the ground by a steel ladder. This has tubular side members, one of which carries the electric power-cable from ground level up to the platform, and the other, the control cable down to the control position (which is at the foot of the support). The control gear is in a small weatherproof box. Hollow railing-posts are utilised for the accommodation of the wires to the running and lifting gear, and to lighting points.

The crane can be erected in three hours on prepared concrete bases: to simplify erection and dismantling, conical boxes of rustless steel are used in the foundations. Before erection, these are concreted in position. Afterwards, they are filled with thin (poured) concrete. As this does not bind on the rustless steel, it can easily be removed for subsequent dismantling. After removal of the crane, the steel boxes are closed by lids flush with the ground, so that they can be left for future re-erection if required, without interfering with traffic.





The two pictures above show stages in erection—with a travelling crane used to swing sections of the new crane into position.

The first cranes of this type were erected during 1950 at seven stations on the Swiss Federal Railways system—Brugg, Bubikon, Netstal, Uzwil, Flawil, Rorschach and Kreuzingen. Each crane spans a railway-line and a road track alongside, left. The platform, right, shows attention to details of design. From this covered position, any necessary maintenance work can be done on the electric hoist. Routine operation is controlled from ground level.



Elegance – by engineering

Machine-room production techniques are supplemented by hand-finishing in a factory making costume jewellery, in an untarnishable light alloy, for world markets

by Stanley Wright

FAR REMOVED both from the traditional costume-jewellery manufacturing centres and from traditional craft-based methods of production, a promising experiment has borne its first fruits. Working at the factory of Oxal (England) Ltd in the Berkshire countryside near Reading, a team of production engineers under the direction of Stephen Leverton has started something of a revolution in the design and manufacture of costume jewellery.

A range of several dozen designs of bracelets, necklaces and ear-clips, already finding a ready sale in home and export markets, is being made by flow-line production methods. All these designs are built up from seven basic units. When brought together, the units achieve an effect of bold yet elegant richness of texture, and a luxuriousness seldom seen outside the range of fine jewellery.

Oxal's *de Farre* jewellery (to give it its trade name) is a direct outcome of good design harnessed to well-planned production methods. Behind the success of Mr Leverton's products lie long researches and patient experiment; many production headaches had to be suffered and many technical problems solved; machines had to be adapted as the basic unit shapes were conceived.

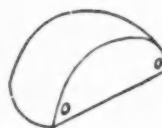
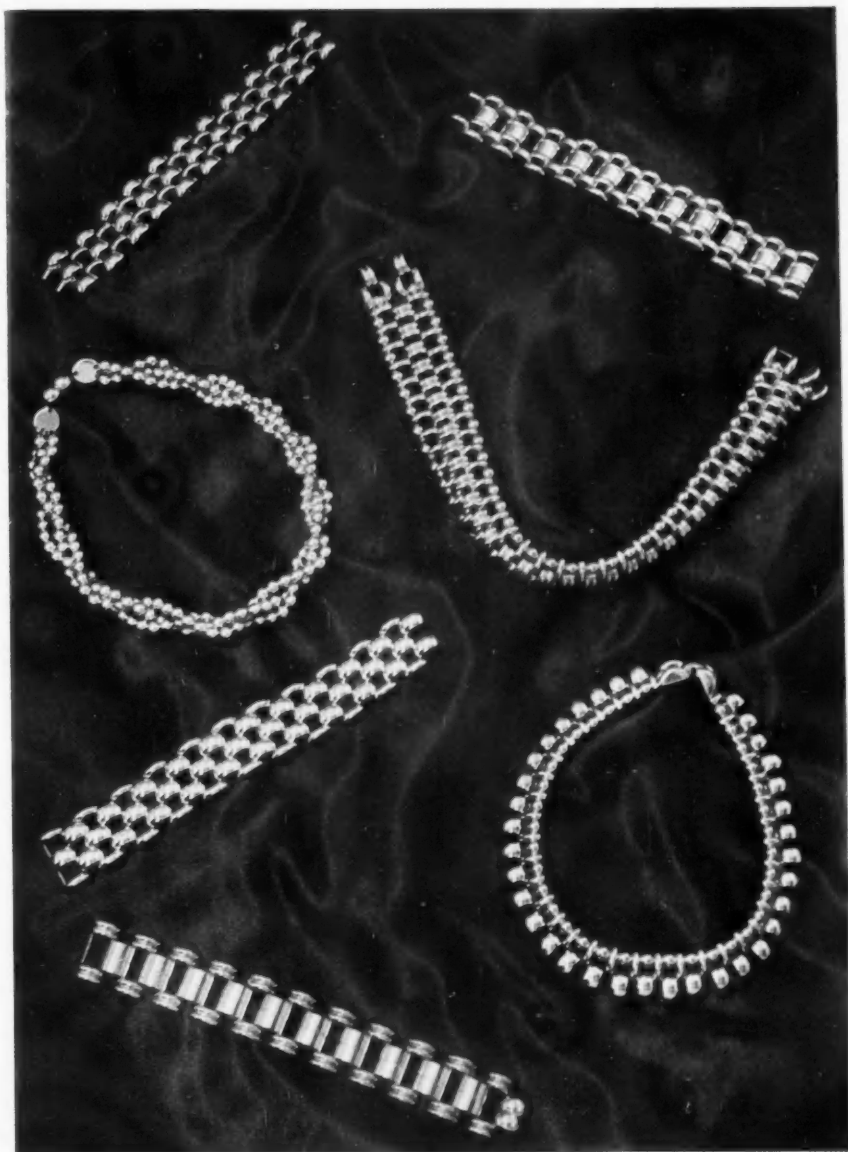
There are many lessons to be learnt from this enterprise—the most important, from the fact that engineer and designer work as a team. The danger of uniformity or monotony of pattern which is so often the result of machine production is greatly lessened by the very fact that the team realise there is such a danger. They are already experimenting with new

developments from their existing designs as well as an increase in the number of basic units to produce new shapes.

The material of *de Farre* jewellery is an alloy, originally developed in Switzerland, which is now being manufactured in this country exclusively for Oxal (England) Ltd. A succession of processes, including a special form of anodic treatment, allows variations in the "gold" and "silver" colours of the finishes.

The characteristic brilliance of the finish is finally achieved by hand-polishing. For most jewellery manufacturers this process is a major headache, consuming time and therefore increasing cost; but at the Oxal works the task is somewhat lightened by the high degree of finish which the units already possess when they come from the machines. Finish is, indeed, considered at every stage of production, right from the beginning: the alloy, which is stacked in 12-foot rods, is handled with the utmost care at every stage of its journey through the factory from raw material to finished necklace or bracelet.

From the purely practical point of view of the wearer, the advantages of this jewellery are obvious. It is non-tarnishable, never losing its high degree of finish—even if worn whilst sea-bathing—and leaving no mark on the neck or wrist; its design ensures that it will look equally well with informal clothes or with an elegant evening gown. To the designer and the manufacturer, its chief interest lies in its conception and its manufacture as an automatic precision machine product.



The whole range of de Farre jewellery is made up of units which are variants of the half-cylinder, together with smaller spherical units. The line drawings of the basic shapes (right) are approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ times actual size.

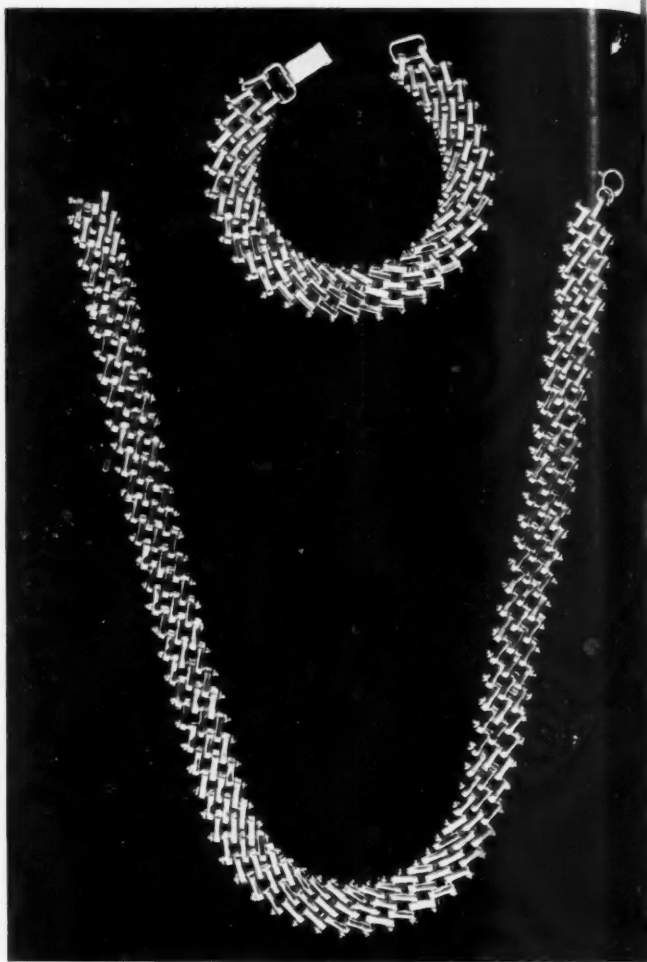
This British-made costume jewellery has already been featured by such fashion-conscious magazines as Vogue and Harper's, and by the London fashion houses.

Colour photograph above by McLeish and Macaulay; colour blocks by Wace.



Gold earrings with large pearls set in deep wine cloisonné enamel. Designed and made by Hortense B. Isenberg of the Craft Students' League, New York.

Below, from France, a necklace of "Bengal opals" in rose-coloured foil and plastic.
Walter Graham (Jewellery) Ltd.



Above, a flexible chain and bracelet set from Germany, where gilding-metal jewellery is manufactured far more cheaply than in England.

Double silver chain necklace with rose quartz, by Miriam Ben-Hurin, of the Craft Students' League, New York.

Sigurd Persson, of Sweden, designed this light-hearted set in oxidised silver for quantity production. It includes earrings as well as the brooch and rings illustrated, left.
Photo: Ateljé Stigbert.



Costume Jewellery FROM SIX COUNTRIES



*Native work with native materials. A summer brooch made entirely of shells dyed and worked by Bahaman natives.
Walter Graham (Jewellery) Ltd.*

ANY ATTEMPT at a universal definition of the term "costume jewellery" meets with the difficulty that each country has its own ideas. But one common factor emerges: costume jewellery is essentially an accessory. Its function is not to encourage the wearer to go out and buy a new dress as a setting for it, or to leave it to her grandchildren. It should underline a mood, and "belong" to the garment or to the season for which it is bought. How wide a range such a definition covers can be seen by comparing its interpretation by the Americans and by the French, the most authoritative and convincing designers of costume jewellery.

The difference between the two approaches to costume jewellery is a logical one. In Paris—still the only playground where the fashion designer really romps at ease—costume jewellery is an accessory to the clothes of the season, and a season is roughly the life-span of each design. In America, designs for mass-produced costume jewellery are changed every few weeks; but in the best of them, as in some of their

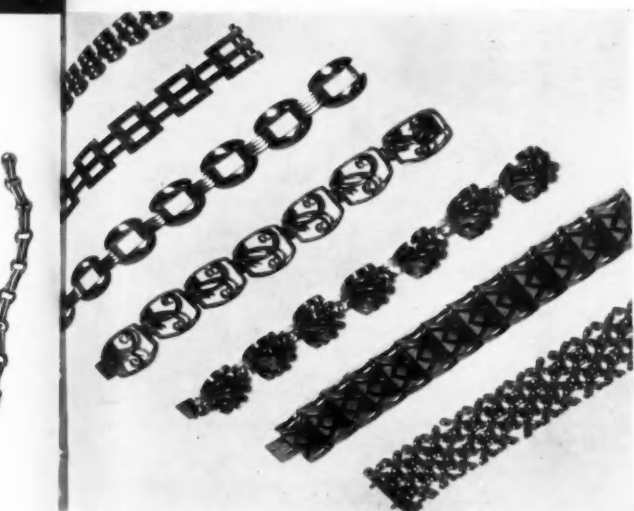
precious costume jewellery, American designers admirably express the spirit of the present day.

Danish and Swedish designs are less striking and at the same time less transient than French or American.

Designers in other countries seem less assured. Austrian and Bohemian glass imitation stones are unsurpassed, but Austrian designers have difficulty in tearing themselves away from the traditional attractions of daisy-chains and *Edelweiss*. Czechoslovakia also produces adaptations of traditional designs; but some day, surely, all possible variations will have been exhausted.

No recognisable characteristics have emerged in German costume jewellery since the war, but what is made is well made and complementary to modern clothes.

P. W.



*Above, cuff links and studs, hollowed-out in silver, by Allen Syme, New York.
This and other American photographs from Craft Horizons.*

Left, the Jablonec factories in Czechoslovakia produce new designs without offending tradition.

Designer's Diary N°3

The design illustrated in this announcement is of special interest. Conceived and planned by A. H. Woodfull, M.S.I.A., Chief Designer of the B.I.P. Product Design Unit, it gained the Award in the 1951 competition for plastics design, an annual competition sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Horners.

The Product. This chair has been designed not only to combine all the most desirable practical features, but to provide a truly hygienic piece of nursery furniture. Amongst the most important innovations are the elimination of germ-collecting joints, corners and crevices; and the form of the chair which has been created in sympathy with the natural form of a child's body.

The Design. The design was influenced by the following main considerations:—

Height. Very careful study was made to determine the most convenient height to enable the child easily to be fed.

Stability. Children tend to rock back and forth, rather than from side to side. This chair can safely be tipped up to an angle of 30 degrees.

Tray Hygiene. The tray is easily detachable to facilitate cleaning. It is clamped securely in position by telescopic arms which retract within the tubular structure when tray is not in use.

Footrest. The footrest is adjustable for height by varying the angle, as the child grows.

Moulding Details. The seat would be moulded in a semi-positive two-plate mould, requiring approximately 750 tons moulding pressure. The footrest would need approximately 200 tons, using a similar type of mould. In the case of both these components, the form would be tipped to approximately 45 degrees to the die block; it is thus placed to avoid sheer faces between punch and die and to assist even flow of the material.

The Material. Beetle urea material for chair, footrest and knobs, chosen for its wide colour range; Beetle Melamine for the tray, because of its excellent resistance to staining and to water.



Patent and registered design protection pending.

The B.I.P. Technical Advisory Service will assist industrial designers and manufacturers who use plastics mouldings in their production processes. Advice is freely offered regarding product styling, mould design, choice of materials and moulding techniques. The Service exists primarily to assist your own designers and technicians regarding those problems peculiar to plastics moulding, with which only a specialist can be completely conversant.

BRITISH INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS LIMITED



1 ARGYLL ST., LONDON, W.1

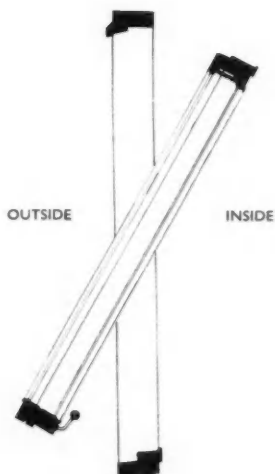
**BEETLE* is a trade mark registered in Great Britain and in most countries of the world*

Swedish-designed windows now made in Britain

THE "CARDA" WINDOW, developed by Åtvidabergs in Sweden, is now being made in Britain and marketed here by Holcon Ltd, London EC2.

Characteristics of this window are (1) the use of large single panes without glazing bars, giving unobstructed light and view; (2) felt packing, between the fixed and hinged parts of the wooden frame, which effectively seals the window against draughts, driving rain or snow; (3) friction discs in the hinge, which make it possible to set the window at any desired angle of opening (up to 30°) without any catch giving pre-determined positions; (4) the window is pivoted so that the outside pane can be swung inwards, enabling both sides of the glass to be cleaned from inside. This characteristic is reflected in the design of many new Swedish buildings, in which it has not been found necessary to provide ledges for window-cleaners to stand on.

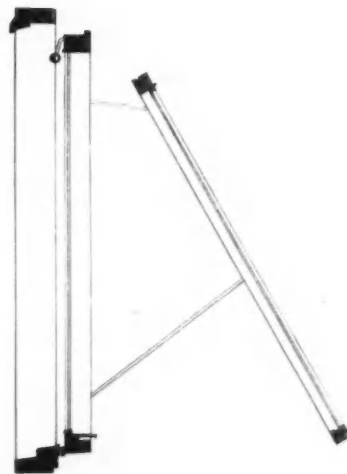
The Carda window is readily adaptable to double glazing, so popular in Scandinavia, which gives improved protection against external cold and noise. The two sashes can be separated and all surfaces can still be cleaned from inside the building. Another advantage of double glazing is that Venetian blinds can be fitted between the outer and inner panes—where they stay clean much longer than in their usual position.



Window partly open. Friction discs in the hinge make it possible to set the window in any position up to 30°.



Window reversed for cleaning. The hinges are slightly offset.



Double-sash window with sashes separated so that the whole can be cleaned from within the building.

Design versus Danger

SIR: Kenneth Howes, in his admirable article "Design versus Danger," has made a valuable contribution to the cause of home safety. There is no doubt that household equipment, designed to be both safe and useful, would be an important factor in reducing accidents in the home.

In suggesting remedies for accidents of all kinds, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents has always emphasised the necessity of first ascertaining the basic facts, and Mr Howes has rendered valuable service by stressing the importance of greater research into the causes of home accidents.

The National Home Safety Committee of my Society . . . welcomes the co-operation of designers and manufacturers as a further step to progress, and it is hoped that this stimulating article may produce further suggestions from your readers.

WINIFRED E. DUNCAN,
Manager, Home Safety Department,
Royal Society for the Prevention
of Accidents, London SW1

SIR: I was much interested in the comment on page 23 of *DESIGN*, November, referring to bridge ashtrays.

We have had a bridge ashtray in production for well over fifteen years, made in pottery. The shape may not be so streamlined as the one shown in your magazine because it has to conform to certain technicalities or it could not be fired.

We are sending one of these ashtrays for your inspection, and also a glass copy

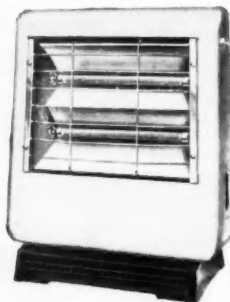


Bridge ashtray in pottery—a registered design, made for Guinness by Wiltshaw and Robinson Ltd, Stoke-on-Trent.

of it, which we had to put into production in rather a hurry, and hope to streamline a little more eventually.

M. PICK,
Advertising Manager,
Arthur Guinness, Son and Co
Ltd, Park Royal, NW10

SIR: May I say how keenly I have been following your latest articles on electrical appliances. In two recent issues, however, references by contributors to progressive designing in two fields of



This Berry electric fire is fitted with a safety guard and a switch which automatically turns off the current if the fire is lifted or tilted.

domestic appliances, cooking and heating, seem to indicate incomplete knowledge of the latest trends.

In "The Changing Shape of the Electric Cooker" (October), the author refers to the general adoption of the Simmerstat with the inference that this control operates *thermostatically*, whereas it actually controls *heat in-put* by infinitely variable switching, controllable by the rotation of a numbered dial.

In the November issue, the author of "Design versus Danger" seems to have incomplete information on the designs now generally adopted by leading manufacturers of electric fires, both for element protection and guarding, and for switch control. The automatic cut-out has taken more than "a step in the right direction"! By the use of fluid-type mercury switches, lifting, tilting, or falling of the fire automatically causes the current to be cut off, so that the fire becomes automatically dead.

Anticipating the newly published British Standard 1670, many manufacturers introduced safety designs in elec-

tric fires over a year ago, and louver guards for standard sizes of reflector fires as far back as June 1950.

MARY GILBERT,
Women's Press Liaison and
Public Relations Officer,
Electrical Development Association,
London WC2

¶ Electric fires with safety switches include the Ferranti *Safera*, already noticed in *DESIGN*: the Berry *Vanguard*, illustrated here, and the Belling *Homeguard*, which was shown in the South Bank Exhibition, Homes and Gardens section.

SIR: While agreeing with Kenneth Howes that much can be done by improved design to reduce danger in the home, we do not believe that the creation of a new organisation similar to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents is called for. If necessary, the existing organisation should be strengthened and more British Standards prepared for consumer goods. There are many British Standards for electrical and other goods that specify the safety conditions with which designers should comply. We use the word "should" advisedly because in many instances compliance is not compulsory.

We have other British Standards which help to eliminate the spread of disease; just as important as preventing accidents. . . . Then again there is BS 1753, "Minimum safety requirements for children's wooden cots for domestic use." What we think is required is an extension of this work and not the formation of a new organisation.

Even good design, of course, will not prevent accidents by the ignorant or foolhardy, such as those caused by taking radios or electric fires into a bathroom.

I have even seen ashtrays of the type illustrated on page 23 of *DESIGN* with cigarettes balanced on the edges when the ashtray is full of ash and cigarette ends. The illustration looks very good, but no fastidious person likes balancing a cigarette across the centre of an ashtray containing debris.

To sum up, we think there is a need for better design to prevent accidents as far as possible, but we believe the best way of achieving this is by a greater use of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and more British Standards incorporating standards of safety for consumer goods.

Perhaps even greater factors than these, however, are education and the exercise of care and common sense.

E. WOODBRIDGE,
Assistant Technical Director,
British Standards Institution,
London SW1

A year of successful selling

The products illustrated on this page were first illustrated in *DESIGN* in January 1951, as examples of good current design. All are products which would not be bought primarily for their appearance, but in all, attention has been given to appearance-design—with the results, in terms of sales, reported below

Motor cycles "selling steadily"

APRIL and November 1951 were celebration months for BSA Cycles Ltd as the 50,000th BSA Bantam and the 10,000th Sunbeam S7 respectively were wheeled off the assembly lines.

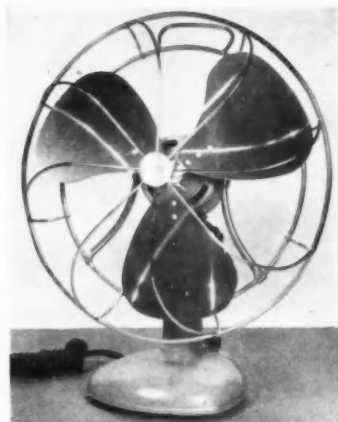
The lightweight Bantam—illustrated for its clean lines and simple construction—is "undoubtedly the most popular motor cycle in Britain," say BSA. It has proved to have a greater carrying capacity than even its designers anticipated; many letters of congratulation from owners who took their Bantams to the Continent, with pillion rider and luggage, have now been received. The machine is selling particularly well in Australia.

The big Sunbeam is in a very different size—and price—category. Its design is unorthodox in many respects, including shaft drive and the combination of cylinder block and crankcase in

one casting; it has proved a commercial proposition, "selling steadily both at home and overseas." Indeed, with this machine as with the Bantam, BSA fear that, if the material shortage becomes more acute, demand will exceed supply and cause a hold-up in delivery.

Fan "a great success"

When they produced the oscillating fan shown here, H. Frost and Co Ltd, of Walsall, had an eye to export requirements. They estimated that demand would be consistently large enough to justify expenditure on die-casting equipment, which would effect savings both in machining time and in the weight of the fan. The firm's managing director now reports the fan as "a great commercial success, sales having expanded considerably in most of the markets of the world and in this country." He points out that to have designed an ap-



Sales of the Frost fan "have expanded considerably in most of the markets of the world."

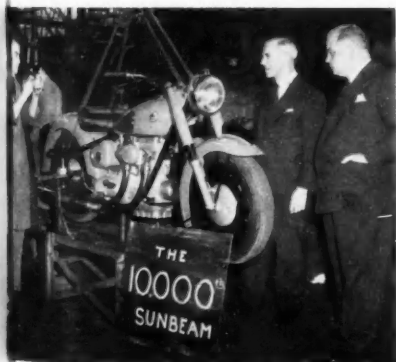
pliance which was aesthetically sound, technically sound and low in cost was "a considerable achievement in a competitive market such as electric fans"—and all three qualities were necessary in a new product in this field.

More orders than they can deal with

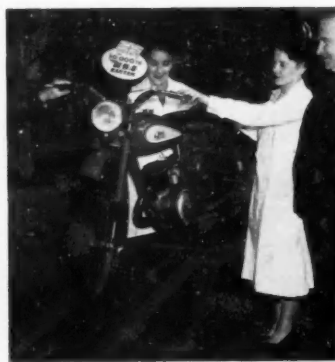
Although the new Courtier stove has not yet been advertised, "the few stoves which have been shown in merchants' windows have resulted in our receiving more orders than we can deal with," state Mitchell, Russell and Co Ltd of Bonnybridge, Scotland, the manufacturers.

There had previously been no major changes in the design of continuous-burning solid-fuel stoves of this make for 23 years.

S. K. L.



The 10,000th Sunbeam S7 comes off the assembly line at Redditch, Worcestershire, watched by G. G. Savage and Alan Jones, BSA's sales and works managers.



The 50,000th Bantam went to Australia. Watching it leave the assembly line is W. L. Rawson, export manager of BSA Cycles Ltd.



The fire doors of this Courtier stove can be folded back, out of the way and out of sight, behind the side panels, which are hinged.

Design NEWS SECTION

PRODUCTS

Pencil and lighter successfully combined

"EXTREMELY NEAT DESIGN," said a retailer (Selfridges)—and for once the extravagant phrase was justified: it referred to the current Ronson *Penciliter*, a new design launched in time for the Christmas trade.

Products which combine two unrelated functions are usually clumsy, and in the past, combined pencils and lighters have not been exceptions. But the new Ronson model ingeniously combines the clip for holding the pencil in one's pocket with the trigger for operating the lighter; and the whole is not very much bulkier—though inevitably it is bulkier—than a normal propelling pencil. In this it marks a considerable advance on Ronson's own previous designs. The alternative finishes in which it is made—black and grey enamel—are also a good deal less restless in appearance than the plated and engine-turned finish formerly employed, though only time can show whether they are



Old and new Ronson Penciliters.

equally serviceable. The new *Penciliter* holds more fuel than earlier models, and contains an eraser and spare pencil-leads as well as a spare flint.

Like other Ronson products (though unlike most Ronson packaging and display material for the British market) it is basically of American design, but it is being manufactured by Ronson Products Ltd in this country. It sells, in a silk-lined case, at £3 10s.

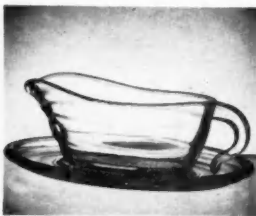
New oven glassware

A ONE-PINT gravy boat has been added to the range of Phoenix glassware, made by the British Heat-Resisting Glass Co Ltd, Bilston, Staffs. It is similar

in shape to their earlier half-pint model.

The design was developed by the firm's Designs Committee, which includes the managers of the production, planning, development and sales departments.

The spur-like handle is easy to hold; it is slightly concave and broader at the top, forming a thumb-rest. A matching platter is also made, and the pair retail at 7s 6d.



Phoenix gravy boat and platter.

New tractors

TWO NEW TRACTORS were among the more noteworthy exhibits at this year's Smithfield Show: the redesigned Fordson Major (to which we hope to refer again in a future issue) and the Ota *Monarch*, shown below.

The *Monarch* is a light tractor with a Ford 10 h.p. engine, and supplements the three-wheeled model already made by the same company (and illustrated in *DESIGN*, June 1950, page 31). In some countries abroad, and in some counties at home also, there is a prejudice against three-wheeled tractors, and it is a fact that certain kinds of row-crop work—among potato ridges, for example—are simpler with a four-wheeler. In the Ota *Monarch*, the track of both front and rear wheels can be adjusted at small intervals between 42in.



Four-wheeled Ota tractor. (Photograph: Power Farmer.)

and 60in. Burman steering gear, now adopted, is claimed to give good performance on rough ground and car-like smoothness in more favourable conditions.

While the manufacturers are still aiming at their original market—the small farmer or other user who cannot afford to run a large and heavy tractor—they have been able to tidy-up design in a number of details, which are reflected in the appearance of the Ota *Monarch* and in ease of operation and maintenance: for example, the bonnet is now hinged at the front and swings forward to give easy access to all parts of the engine.

The new model is due to go into production next April. It is made by Oak Tree Appliances Ltd, Coventry, and distributed by Slough Estates (London) Ltd, W1.

Table for television

A 'TELEVISION TABLE,' with revolving top, has been designed and made by David Joel Ltd, Tolworth, Surrey. It comes into the tax-free range (retail price, £4 4s) and though only of occasional-table size, it is large enough and strong enough to accommodate any table-model television set.

PACKAGING

New packs for electrical goods

ALMOST AT the same moment, two well-known firms in different branches of the electrical industry have announced schemes of large-scale package redesign. We illustrate typical new packs from both firms—Ediswan and Ever Ready—not because they are outstandingly fine examples of design, but because they are much better than the majority of packs in this somewhat neglected field of industry.

Ediswan evidently have a policy of emphasising the name *Ediswan* itself and playing down the brand-name *Mazda*, simultaneously with the introduction of their new package designs; hence a change in the wording. The new packs, which are being introduced gradually for an extensive range of Ediswan products, embody a newly standardised colour scheme. While they show no change in materials or construction, the improvement in surface design is so evident as to need no further comment here.

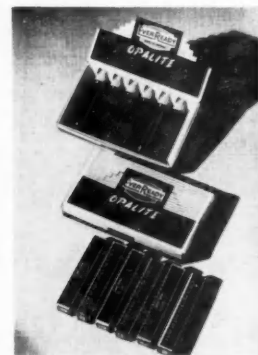


Ediswan packs: before and after.

Cartons for certain other Ediswan products have at the same time been changed more drastically. For example, the Morganite television interference suppressors used to be packed in plain boxes with plain black-and-white labels, but these were recently replaced by display containers for use on retailers' counters: Ediswan report that "not only did the sales of these suppressors show a marked increase when the new package was introduced, but several requests were received from wholesalers for empty display cartons in which to repack their existing stocks of the suppressors."

Ever Ready, too, have changed the form of their packaging. For many lines, they have done away with separate cartons for individual items and replaced them by display cartons for a dozen. Comparison of a new carton with a group of the old ones, as in our photograph, shows the marked increase in display value. Ever Ready have also taken the opportunity of more closely standardising the shades of blue and orange used in all their packaging.

The changes in surface design have been limited by the retention of the old form of name block, which no doubt has good-



Display value is increased.

will value as a result of years of use, but is none the less difficult to incorporate as an element in a modern package design.

Credits: The cartons for The Edison Swan Electric Co Ltd designed by London Typographical Designers Ltd, SW1. Some other cartons, not illustrated here, designed by Ediswan Publicity Department in conjunction with Dorland Advertising Ltd. Cartons for The Ever Ready Co (Great Britain) Ltd designed by H. Thomson, London N8, and made in Ever Ready's own printing and box-making works at Watford.

PUBLICATIONS

The US market for British goods

To help British exporters, the Board of Trade has produced a new booklet on *Exporting to the United States of America* (HMSO, 2s 6d). Sir Hartley Shawcross, in a foreword, emphasises that "it is not an attempt to teach exporters how to do their own business. It is meant rather as an indication of where the main difficulties lie in the United States market, and of what may be done to overcome them." A chapter on sales promotion has sections on Style and

Design, and Packaging, and emphasises that

in many cases it is as important that the United Kingdom industrial designer should study the United States design style at first hand constantly in view of its constant fluctuation.

Only by close familiarity can the designer appeal to this market without slavishly copying United States designs.

The cover of the booklet—which incorporates a map of the States—is illustrated on our front cover.

Sir Charles Tennyson writes the foreword to *Memorial Craftsmanship*, a brochure published by the Guild of Memorial Craftsmen (195 Piccadilly, London W1; price 3s 6d), which includes 60 illustrations of contemporary private and public memorials. They show generally a high standard of design; in lettering, especially high.

The Minister of Education, on the advice of the National Advisory Committee on Art Examinations, has decided to introduce in 1952 certain changes in the arrangements for the examinations which were announced in 1950. The principal changes (which are included in *Rules 110 [1952]*) have as their aim the dual object of a reduction in the amount of work which candidates are re-

quired to submit to the Ministry and an increase in the responsibilities of the staffs of art schools for conducting the examinations.

New *British Standards* include one for street lighting lanterns (BS 1788: 1951; price 3s 0d). It refers to both electric and gas lighting and "is intended to make for safety, durability and ease of maintenance."

Metal Finishing is a new Productivity Report (Anglo-American Council on Productivity, 3s 6d).

Readers may like to know of the following recent articles on various aspects of design:

Ark (published by the Royal College of Art), October 1951, is devoted almost entirely to "Political and Religious Art."

Art and Industry, December, has a comprehensive feature on printed wrapping papers, "The Festive Parcel," with illustrations in colour.

Sales Appeal has begun a new series of articles on commercial designers with features on Abram Games (September) and Lewitt-Him (November).

The Times Review of Industry, December, under the heading "Designing Large Aircraft," describes the mould lofting technique, now widely used in aircraft fuselage and hull design, as it is practised by Saro's.



British Railways' new third-class sleeping car is divided into two-berth compartments. Most of the refinements of a first-class sleeper have been introduced, including washing facilities in the compartment, made-up beds, mirrors and carpets. The upper part of the compartment extends over the corridor to give extra luggage space. Ventilation and heating are by means of Thermotank equipment which uses solid fuel instead of gas. Thirty-six third-class sleepers of this type are due to be built by the end of 1952.

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NAMES



HAROLD F. HUTCHISON, London Transport's Publicity Officer, (above) is the new Chairman of the Design and Industries Association. He has been a member of the Association's National Council for the past four years.

Mr Hutchison is the second officer of London Transport to hold the office of DIA chairman: the first was the late Frank Pick, a founder member of the Association.

The General Electric Co Ltd established in 1946 an Industrial Design Section under **LESLIE J. ROBERTS**, MSIA, to study the whole question of industrial design as applied to the Company's wide range of products. He has since been joined by **OLIVER HILL**, MSIA, and **ANTHONY MANN**. Mr Hill was formerly with Philips Electrical Ltd and Mr Mann was a 1950 Industrial Art Bursary winner; an example of his work is illustrated on page 7.

HAROLD DOWDING is in charge of the new typographical design service which has been added to the typesetting and process-engraving facilities already offered by the Wace Group, London WC2. Mr Dowding continues as a part-time instructor in design at the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts.

ARTHUR SANDERSON and Sons Ltd will be holding an exhibition, "Décor 1952," at their showrooms in Berners Street, London W1, from 14 to 25 January. It will include the first European showing of the Courtauld-Sanderson Collection of Ancestral Fabrics.

A. J. COX, Exhibition Manager of the Engineering Centre, reports the opening of a catalogue library containing publications of more than 3,000 firms and a complete set of British Standards. Other firms, not already represented, are invited to add the Engineering Centre (351 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow C2) to their mailing lists.

SIR DAVID BRUNT, MA, SCD, FRs, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of Fulmer Research Institute, Stoke Poges. The object of this Institute (founded in 1946 on the initiative of Colonel W. C. Devereux) is to carry out sponsored research.

DENNIS YOUNG, ARCA, MSIA, collaborated with the Council of Industrial Design in the production of three new film strips dealing with design in framed-up chairs and design in easy chairs.

Obituary: **R. P. GOSSOP**, one of the pioneers of advertising art in this country—first as a practising artist, later as an artists' agent—died on 9 November. Mr Gossop was an original member and an early Council member of the DIA, the first honorary secretary of the SIA, and the author of *Advertisement Design* (1924), a landmark in the history of its subject. Many readers will remember his article on trade-marks, "Emblems of industry," in *DESIGN*, April 1950.

RETAILING

At Harvey Nichols of Knightsbridge, Formica laminated plastic is gradually replacing existing materials for shop fittings and panelling.

Nearly two years ago, G. Withers, who is in charge of the

store's maintenance department, made his first trial of Formica. Three types of the material have now been used—buff linette, grey linette, and bleached mahogany wood-grain.

In many of Harvey Nichols' departments, displays of clothing are mounted on low wooden platforms, which are liable to damage by the display staff when they change the models on show: Mr Withers plans to use Formica as a surfacing material for all these platforms. In a new chiropody department, the panelling, both inside and outside the cubicles, is of Formica, applied to Plimber board and fitted into pale green frame members of extruded aluminium.

HARRISON GIBSON held an exhibition of contemporary furniture and accessories, called "Design for Modern Living," at Ilford and subsequently at Bromley and Bedford. According to the December issue of *Furnishing*—which devotes a four-page article to this subject—"the presentation of the exhibition, no less than the merchandise itself . . . thoroughly captured the interest of the public."

DUNNS OF BROMLEY were asked to supply contemporary furniture for the play *Third Person*, which completed its run at the Arts Theatre recently. Fanny Taylor, a resident designer at the theatre, was responsible for the décor.

THREE LARGE WINDOWS at the Worthing branch store of Bentalls of Kingston were recently devoted to a display of contemporary furniture. Mr Hurren, the firm's general manager at Worthing, reports that the display aroused much interest, and "results were most encouraging."

It is claimed that this was the first exhibition in Worthing of furniture, furnishings and accessories in contemporary style.

One of the windows is illustrated below.



This window at Bentalls was part of the first display of contemporary furniture in Worthing.

Progress in fireplace design

continued from page 21

fireplaces in different styles, standing about at different angles, they now have a series of alcoves in each of which a few well-chosen pieces of furniture—a rug, a chair, a contemporary wallpaper—give the atmosphere of a room in a private house. Moreover, their good-design policy extends to their printed matter: their latest catalogue is notable for its freedom alike from over-retouched illustrations and over-written text. Natural photographs—taken in the showrooms—show what the fireplaces really look like; and these are supplemented by a minimum of verbiage.

Mr Kitching, in the article already quoted, asserts that it is "to some extent the responsibility of the trade [*i.e.* retailers] and of the manufacturers who supply them" that "the level of taste shown by the general public has so far made remarkably little progress. . . . They cannot be expected to go out of business until public taste improves, but they can ensure that good designs are available to their customers and that they receive due prominence in good settings in their showrooms."

Encouragingly, Broads find that the result of acting on this belief themselves is better business. More of their fireplaces are now sold to or through architects—the biggest purchasers today, as well as the most design-minded. Besides buying the standard product, architects in increasing numbers come to Broads when they require special fireplaces to be made up to their own designs.

Moreover, the firm's growing reputation for good design has extended the market for their products far beyond the Greater London area served by their showrooms. Recent orders have come from the North-West, from Scotland, Wales and the Channel Islands. A.D.

'DESIGN'

Perpetua bold and Perpetua italic types are used for the main headlines in this issue of *DESIGN*. Pages 32–34 are set in 7-point Times Roman instead of our usual Plantin. By this means the number of words per page (in a full page) is increased to 1,600, as against 1,350 in a three-column page of 8-on-9-point Plantin (such as page 30).

The headline on page 4 is set in 48-point Locarno bold italic, and the headline on page 27 in 36-point Marina Script.

Typography of this issue is, as usual, by Stuart Rose, MSIA.

Binding cases: see page 36. Index: see last month's issue, page 37.

Advertising: new arrangements for the advertisement representation of *DESIGN* magazine are announced on the outside back cover of the present issue.

THE MASON HERMES CONTINUOUS PLAN PRINTER

This is an excellently designed NEW machine, specially produced for those who require high quality prints in comparatively small quantities. It has a light source consisting of standard industrial fluorescent tubes, a versatility for producing any type of print, and every feature of simplicity for perfection in operation.

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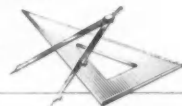
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